

# Martha Kovack

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## Introduction

Martha Kovack, MEd, OCT is a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers and is a certified Orton-Gillingham and Practical Linguistics Teacher with the Canadian Dyslexia Society. For sixteen years, Martha was the Early Literacy Specialist with the Ontario Early Years system. In this capacity, she produced a multitude of early learning resources for educators and parents to help them understand the many facets of early literacy right from birth, how to identify young children who may be at risk for later reading struggles, and what we can do to help all children gain the skills needed to be well prepared for success in school. Martha is currently a Language Arts instructor in the Early Childhood Education program at Georgian College in Ontario. She also provides structured literacy tutoring, and training for K-3 teachers in her private practice to help bring evidence-based, reliable, and valid research about beginning reading instruction into practice.

## Education

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER

- Master of Education in Early Childhood Education
- Final Capstone e-Portfolio: <https://marthakovack.wixsite.com/easingtheflow>
- Final average: 92%

BROCK UNIVERSITY, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO

- Bachelor of Arts, Child Studies, with Distinction
- Dean's Honours List – 80% average in senior-level courses

BROCK UNIVERSITY, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO

- Bachelor of Education (Primary/Junior Qualifications)

## Work Experience

GEORGIAN COLLEGE, BARRIE ON

*Instructor and Student Monitor, Jan 2018 – present*

- Prepares Language Arts course content for Early Childhood Education program, **including online classes**, and facilitates curriculum weekly
- Completes grade books, learning assessments, and exams on a timely basis
- Demonstrates a passion for teaching and engaging students in the learning process by providing individual attention to all students to encourage a sense of belonging, engagement, well-being, and expression (Faculty Evaluations available upon request)
- Created interactive Preschool Language and Literacy Matters website for students: <https://marthakovack.wixsite.com/preschoolliteracy>
- Completed “Foundations” Post-Secondary Teaching Series Course: <https://www.georgiancollege.ca/ctlae/faculty-professional-development/multi-part-series-descriptions/#foundations-series-description>

## ONTARIO EARLY YEARS - E3 COMMUNITY SERVICES, COLLINGWOOD , ONTARIO

*Early Literacy Specialist, Jan 2002 – March 2018 (16.3 years)*

- Developed and implemented more than 4000 hours of early literacy training through play-based workshops, programs, and site visits to help over 20 000 early years educators and families
- Implemented evidence-informed literacy activities within schools, childcare centres, resource teacher programs, Ontario Early ON Centres, Community Action Program for Children sites, college classes, libraries, adult learning centres, and health care programs
- Created and facilitated the **Early Literacy Leaders Initiative (ELLI)** (see <http://marthakovack.wixsite.com/elli> ), an innovative “professional learning community that comes together over time with shared interests and passions to engage in the process of collective and collaborative learning” (2013, Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research, p. 18)
- Designed, developed, and produced a series of free early learning video clips, booklets, language and literacy provocation play bins, and other resources
- Increased quality of early years professional interactions with children by offering regular consultations alongside concrete demonstrations of playful activities based on Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Collaborated with the Ontario Early Years Data Analysis Coordinator to implement the Early Development Instrument (EDI), including co-facilitating training
- Co-authored the Early Literacy Specialist (ELS) Best Practice Guide for the Provincial Association of Early Literacy Specialists
- Developed relationships with community partners as a member of Simcoe County's Early Learning Professional Development Committee, the Early Intervention "Early Screening Matters" committee, the Father Involvement Initiative committee, and the Road to Reading event committee (chair), as well as the Provincial Early Literacy Specialist Best Practices Committee
- Consulted with shareholders throughout Simcoe County to be a central resource to link people, early learning information, and resources

## SOUND READERS, BARRIE, ONTARIO

*Private Practice, Jan 1997 – Present*

- Hired by schools, teacher’s federations, and early years programs to develop and facilitate early literacy programs and professional development.
- Designed and facilitated play-based early & family language/literacy training for teachers and parents to assist them in implementing evidence-informed approaches to learning to read
- Interviewed, trained and coached volunteer teachers and parents with the Scottish Rite Learning Centres for Children to assist them in tutoring children who struggle with learning to read
- Created, produced, and distributed early literacy games (*Crazy Cards* card games) and other resources for families and teachers to help them implement evidence-based activities to improve reading achievement (*Crazy Cards* card games have been praised internationally for 20 years)
- Formally assessed and tutored students privately (K-6) using Orton-Gillingham/Structured Literacy approaches to reading instruction
- Currently provides online training in structured literacy approaches for teachers and administrators

- Created website for teachers to support equal and efficient access to print:  
<https://www.letsgetreadingright.com/>
- Consults regularly with psychologists, reading specialists, speech and language pathologists, and leaders within reading organizations and universities to share early literacy information and knowledge, and to discuss ideas for research into practice

SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, SIMCOE COUNTY, ONTARIO  
*Primary School Teacher, Sep 1990 – Sep 1995*

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, MIDHURST, ONTARIO  
*Primary School Teacher, Sep 1997 – Jun 1999*

## Qualifications Summary

- Certified Member in Good Standing with the Ontario College of Teachers (1990-present)
- Mental Health First Aid Certification with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2018)
- Hanen Program Certified Trainer: Learning Language and Loving It - Encouraging Language Development in Early Childhood Settings (2013-2016)
- Certified Practical Linguistics Teacher (Specialist: Orton-Gillingham/Multisensory Language), Canadian Dyslexia Society (2014-present)
- Certified Tutor and Senior Mentor with the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada Learning Centres for Children (2014-2017)

## Recent Training

- Mental Health First Aid Certification  
Mental Health Commission of Canada (2 days) (May 2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- Foundations Post-Secondary Teaching Series  
Centre for Teaching and Learning, Georgian College (2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- Supporting International Students  
Centre for Teaching and Learning, Georgian College (May 2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- Make the Connection (0-1 and 1-2) Group Leader Training  
(The Psychology Foundation of Canada) (3 days) (June 2017) Toronto ON
- Infant Mental Health Promotion 6th National Institute - Expanding Horizons for the Early Years  
(12 hours) (April 27/28, 2017) Toronto ON
- Kids Have Stress Too! Preschool/Kindergarten Program (6 hours) The Psychology Foundation of Canada  
(May 2016)
- The International Dyslexia Association Annual Conference (8 hours) Toronto ON (March 2016)

- Infant Mental Health Community Training Institute (35 hours)
- Infant Mental Health Promotion, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto (2015)
- Speech Services Niagara Conferences (11 years, Fall 2003 - 2014)
- We're Stronger Together Early Learning Conferences (Spring, 2012-2017)
- Connecting Language and Mental Health in the Early Years conference with Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, Peterborough ON (May 2014)
- Embracing the Early Years Conference, Burlington, ON (Nov/2013)
- Learning Language and Loving It (Hanan.org) training, Toronto ON (December, 2013)
- Completion of theory and techniques of the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® (LiPS®) Program (2012)
- Completion of Advanced Morphology with Ron Yoshimoto, M.Ed., M.S.W., F/AOGP, Director of Teacher Training, Department of Education, Hawaii, USA (linguistic analysis of morphologically complex vocabulary, and the application and extension of morphology curriculum to include the development and use of a wide variety of therapy materials and resources) (2012)
- Completion of Working Memory, Learning, and Language with Dr. Lisa Archibald, Assistant Professor in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Western University, London, ON (understanding memory and language systems in children and how they impact learning) (2012)

## Membership

- Ontario College of Teachers
- The Reading League
- International Dyslexia Association

## Professional Certification

- Member in Good Standing with the Ontario College of Teachers
- Certified Practical Linguistics Teacher (Specialist: Orton-Gillingham/Multisensory Language), Canadian Dyslexia Society (2014-present)

## Professional Experience

- Georgian College Instructor for the Early Childhood Education program (Barrie/Orillia, ON) (January 2018-present)
- Georgian College Student Monitor for the Early Childhood Education Program (Barrie/Orillia, ON) (January 2018 - present)
- Simcoe County Ontario Early Years Early Literacy Specialist  
More than 4 000 workshops for over 20 000 teachers, early learning practitioners, parents (January, 2002 –2018)

- *Let's Get Reading Right* Courses for Teachers  
Ongoing facilitation of introductory 8-hour course for teachers in Orton-Gillingham and Structured Literacy Approaches offered in person, and online
- Chatham-Kent Child Care and Early Years  
*What is your Superpower?* Early Literacy Workshops for educators  
(October 4, 5, 2019)
- Sevenoaks Academy Private School  
Introduction to Orton-Gillingham Approaches for teachers  
January 2019 (Barrie, ON)
- Gan Nitzanim Child Care Centre  
*Getting Literacy into Play* workshop for childcare practitioners  
November 2017 (Thornhill, ON)
- Kitiganik Elementary School, Rapid Lake, Quebec  
*Multisensory Structured Language* workshop for 14 teachers  
(August 2016)  
Rapid Lake, Quebec
- Durham Catholic DECE Local  
*Multisensory Structured Language* workshop for 30 DECEs  
May 2016 (Oshawa ON)
- Umbrella Child Care School Age Conference  
*Getting Literacy Into Play* workshop for Early Childhood Practitioners  
(November 2015) Scarborough ON
- Lambton County Sowing the Seeds for Literacy Conference  
Keynote Speaker for 200 kindergarten teachers, early learning professionals, librarians, and speech-language pathologists  
*Getting Literacy into Play: Making Every Moment Count*  
Lambton College, Sarnia ON  
(February, 2015)
- e.p.i.c. School Professional Development Days  
Keynote Speaker for all staff *Phonemic Awareness Training*  
(February, 2015) (September 2015) Toronto ON
- Communicative Disorders Association of Canada (CDAAC)  
Keynote Speaker for Communicative Disorders Assistants at their annual conference *Chit Chat with Children - Encouraging Personal Narrative*  
Toronto ON  
(November, 2014)
- Grand Erie District School Board, and Brant County Ontario Early Years  
Keynote Speaker for 60 Kindergarten teachers and early learning professionals  
*Phonological Awareness and Alphabet Play*  
Brantford ON  
(November 2013) (November 2014)
- Durham Region Spring Into Literacy Conference  
Keynote Speaker for 150 kindergarten teachers, early learning educators, librarians, speech-language pathologists  
*Getting Literacy into Play: Making Every Moment Count*  
Whitby, ON (March, 2014)

- Claremont School Conferences, Toronto ON  
Phonemic Awareness Workshops  
100 Teachers and Parents  
(February 2013) (February 2014)
- Kitigan Zibi Kikinamadinan School, Maniwaki, Quebec  
Full-day workshop for 15 K-5 teachers:  
(August, 2010)
- LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) Half-day workshop for 12 early learning practitioners, Mississauga, ON  
(December 2009)
- LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada)  
Full-day workshop for 25 early learning practitioners, Brampton, ON  
(December 2010)
- For the Love of Literacy Conference, Halton District School Board  
Workshops for 140 K-3 teachers (April, 2006) (April, 2009)  
Burlington ON
- The 59th Annual Conference of the International Dyslexia Assn, Seattle Washington  
From Struggling Readers to Sound Readers workshop  
30 primary school teachers and tutors  
Washington State Convention Center  
(October, 2008)
- Maryborough Public School, Moorefield, ON  
Workshop for 25 kindergarten parents and teachers:  
(June, 2008)
- Monsignor Michael O'Leary Elementary School, Bracebridge, ON  
Workshop for 30 primary/junior parents  
(June 5, 2008)
- On the Same Page Early Literacy Conference, Geneva Park Conference Centre  
Simcoe County Workshop for 65 early learning practitioners  
(May, 2008)
- 2008 Annual LINC/TESL Hamilton Wentworth Spring Conference  
Workshop for 25 English language learner teachers  
(February 29, 2008)
- Hamilton Wentworth Kindergarten Teacher's Association  
Workshop for 40 kindergarten teachers  
(November 2007)
- Moose Cree Education Authority, Moose Factory Island, ON  
Keynote Speaker for 15 early learning practitioners (January, 2007)
- Oxford County Early Literacy Conference, Woodstock, ON  
Keynote Speaker for 120 early learning practitioners (November 2006)
- Markdale Ontario Early Years Centres, Markdale, ON  
Workshops for 30 Early Learning Practitioners (April 2006)
- Chatham-Kent Ontario Early Years Centres, Chatham, ON  
Keynote Speaker for 80 Early Learning Practitioners (May 2005)

- The Toronto Public Library  
Keynote Speaker for 150 Reading and Homework Help Tutors (November 1999) (February, 2005)
- Muskoka Family Focus Conference, Gravenhurst, ON  
Keynote Speaker for 40 Early Learning Practitioners (February 2005)
- Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, Ancaster, ON  
Workshop for 60 K-3 teachers: (October 2003)
- York University, Toronto ON  
Guest lecturer for 60 teacher candidate & psychology students  
(February 2000) (October, 2001)
- George R Allen Elementary School, Hamilton ON  
Workshop for 40 K-3 teachers (October 2001)
- St. Bernadette's Catholic Elementary School, York Catholic DSB  
Workshop for 20 K-3 teachers (January 2001)
- Simcoe County Children's Aid Society, Barrie ON  
Workshops for 80 foster parents (October 2000) (October 2001)
- Curriculum '98, '99', '03 Conferences, Collingwood ON  
Workshops for 200 K-3 teachers (April 1998, 1999, 2003)
- Andrew Hunter School/Baxter Elementary School, Barrie/Baxter ON  
Implemented peer tutoring program with 500 Students in 27 classes  
(November 1999, 2000)
- Simcoe County District School Board, Midhurst ON  
18 workshops for 700 K-3 teachers (March – May 1999)
- Simcoe County District School Board, Midhurst, ON  
60 workshops for 750 parents at 30 different schools: Alliston, Barrie, Beeton, Bradford, Collingwood, Creemore, Innisfil, Midland, Orillia, Stayner, Tottenham, Wasaga Beach  
(January 1998–December 2001)
- Georgian Literacy Collingwood, ON  
Workshops for 80 adult tutors (October 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001)
- Frontier College Reading Circle Conference, Toronto ON  
Workshop for 80 Reading Circle facilitators: (May 1999, April, 2000)